

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 11, 14-15 and 18 are pending in this application. Claims 11, 15 and 18 are amended; and Claims 12, 13, 16, and 19-24 are canceled by the present amendment. Support for amended Claims 11, 15, and 18 can be found in the original specification, claims and drawings.¹ No new matter is presented.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claim 15 was objected to; Claims 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 18-20, and 21-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

The Office Action rejected Claims 11, 12 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, asserting that Claim 11 “omits structural/connectional/functional/ interrelationship of the element ‘second decoding unit’ with the element ‘first decoding unit’”

In response, independent Claim 11 is amended to recite, *inter alia*,

a first decoding unit;
a second decoding unit, wherein an output of the first
decoding unit is connected to an input of the second decoding
unit and an output of the second decoding unit is connected to
an input of the first decoding unit...

As depicted in Figs. 2 and 3, for example, an output of a first decoding unit (25) is connected to an input of a second decoding unit (30), and an output of the second decoding unit (30) is connected to an input of the first decoding unit (25). Therefore, amended Claim 11 clearly recites a structural/connectional/functional/ interrelationship between the claimed first and second decoding units.

¹ e.g., specification, Figs. 2-3.

The Office Action also rejects Claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, asserting that the claimed interrelationship between the normalization unit and the first and second decoding units is unclear.

In response, Claim 11 is amended to recite, *inter alia*,

...a first normalization unit, wherein an output of the first normalization unit is connected to the output of the first decoding unit.

As depicted in Figs. 2 and 3, for example, the output of the normalization unit (27) is connected only to the output of the first decoder (25). Thus, Claim 11 clearly recites the connectional interrelationship between the first decoding unit, the second decoding unit, and the normalization unit.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of Claim 11 (and Claims 12 and 14, which were rejected as dependent on Claim 11) under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, be withdrawn.

The Office Action rejected Claims 15, 16 and 18-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, asserting that the claim is unclear “about a connectional interrelationship of the input/output of each of the decoding units with the input/output of the rest of the decoding units...”

In response, Claim 15 is amended to recite, *inter alia*,

providing a first and second decoding unit, wherein an output of the first decoding unit is connected to an input of the second decoding unit and an output of the second decoding unit is connected to an input of the first decoding unit...

As discussed above, Figs. 2 and 3 show that an output of a first decoding unit (25) is connected to an input of a second decoding unit (30), and an output of the second decoding unit (30) is connected to an input of the first decoding unit (25). Therefore, amended Claim

15 clearly recites the connectional interrelationship of the input/output of the first decoding unit with the input/output of the second decoding unit.

The Office Action also rejects Claim 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, asserting that the claimed interrelationship between the normalization unit and the first and second decoding units is unclear.

In response, Claim 15 is amended to recite, *inter alia*,

...normalizing data obtained from the first decoding unit by connecting the output of a first normalization unit to the output of the first decoding unit.

As depicted in Figs. 2 and 3, for example, the output of the normalization unit (27) is connected only to the output of the first decoder (25), thereby normalizing data obtained from the first decoding unit. Thus, Claim 11 clearly recites the connectional interrelationship between the first and second decoding units, and the normalization unit, and how the claimed steps functionally correspond and effect one another.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of Claim 15 (and Claims 18, which was rejected as dependent on Claim 15) under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, be withdrawn.

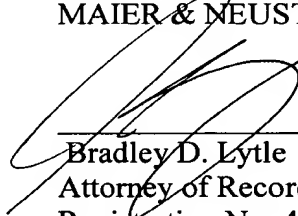
Claims 21-24 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. However, these claims are canceled thereby rendering this rejection moot.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the foregoing comments, it is respectfully submitted that the invention defined by Claims 11, 14-15 and 18, is definite and patentably distinguishing over the prior art. The present application is therefore believed to be in condition for formal allowance and an early and favorable reconsideration of the application is therefore requested.

Should the above amendments be found unpersuasive, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner provide an explanation via Advisory Action pursuant to MPEP 714.13 specifically indicating why such amendments fail to overcome the rejections set forth in the Final Official Action for purposes of facilitating the appeal process.

Respectfully submitted,

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